

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 OIC-04 AEC-11 OMB-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1292

INFO SECDEF

USIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07527

GENEVA FOR CSCE DEL

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PARM, NATO, UK

SUBJECT: MBFR: UK POSITION ON PARTICIPATION IN PHASE II

REF: USNATO 3368

1. ON JUNE 14 WE DISCUSSED UK STATEMENT ON PARTICIPATION IN MBFR PHASE II WITH MCLAREN OF FCO. HE MADE FOLLOWING POINTS ON SUBSTANCE AND TIMING OF STATEMENT.

(A) LOGAN WAS GIVEN NO INSTRUCTIONS ON TIMING OF STATEMENT. FCO ASSUMES HE PICKED COUNCIL MEETING OF JUNE 13 IN ORDER TO ANTICIPATE ANY REFERENCE FOREIGN
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SECRETARY CALLAGHAN MIGHT MAKE TO UK DECISION IN OTTAWA

MINISTERIAL.

(B) THIS IS FIRST FORMAL COMMITMENT BY UK TO REDUCE ITS OWN FORCES IN CONTEXT OF MBFR BUT IT IS LOGICAL STEP IN VIEW OF UK POSITION AGREEING TO GIVE ASSURANCES TO WARSAW PACT ON SCOPE OF PARTICIPATION IN PHASE II.

(C) STATEMENT OF THIS TYPE HAS BEEN ON THE CARDS EVER SINCE UK DEFENSE REVIEW UNDERTAKEN BY NEW GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH IT IS CLEAR THAT POLICY GUIDING DEFENSE REVIEW IS TO ENSURE THAT UK COMMITMENT TO NATO IS MAINTAINED, UK PARTICIPATION IN PHASE II REDUCTIONS WOULD BE CONSONANT WITH GENERAL TREND OF REVIEW.

2. OTHER SIGNIFICANT ASPECT IS THAT IN MAKING DECISION THAT UK WILL PARTICIPATE, MINISTERS OF NEW GOVERNMENT WERE BRIEFED FULLY ON MBFR FOR ALMOST FIRST TIME. IMMINENCE OF DPC AND OTTAWA MINISTERIAL WAS IN PART RESPONSIBLE FOR TIMING. BUT IN ANY CASE THERE WILL BE MORE MINISTERIAL PARTICIPATION IN ONGOING UK CONSIDERATION OF MBFR QUESTIONS IN FUTURE.

3. WE ASKED MCLAREN IF THERE WAS ANY SIGNIFICANCE IN FACT THAT CALLAGHAN GAVE SPEECH TO FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION IN LONDON ON JUNE 13 WHICH EMPHASIZED TWO-PHASE APPROACH TO MBFR. IT SAID THAT "AGREEMENT TO REDUCE SOVIET AND AMERICAN FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE WOULD CREATE A CLIMATE OF CONFIDENCE IN WHICH REDUCTIONS OF EUROPEAN FORCES COULD THEN FOLLOW." WE ALSO NOTED THAT JUNE 14 MORNING PAPERS FURTHER REPORTED THAT IMPLICATION OF DEFENSE SECRETARY MASON'S COMMENTS TO EUROGROUP MINISTERS IN BRUSSELS ON JUNE 13 WAS THAT "BRITAIN MAY HAVE TO REDUCE ITS SPENDING ON NATO." MCLAREN ASSURED US THAT THERE WAS NO SPECIAL POLICY CONNECTION IN TIMING OF ANY OF THESE STATEMENTS.

4. EXTRACTS OF CALLAGHAN SPEECH BEING POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES.

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